



Productive Environment Day Checklist

Created by Barbara Hemphill, Author *Taming the Paper Tiger at Work*

- _____ 1. Assign one person to coordinate a day. Choose someone who has good rapport with the staff and is proficient at organizing events.
- _____ 2. Select the day carefully. Choose a time when office demands are at their lowest. If your company is large, do it department by department.
- _____ 3. Create an announcement to be posted well in advance. Make certain that everyone understands they are expected to participate. Designate specific hours for beginning and ending the day.
- _____ 4. Collect all available information within the company and from your financial and legal advisors about retention guidelines. Make sure they are in a user-friendly format.
- _____ 5. Make arrangements for answering phones so participants have minimum interruptions. Hire a temporary employee or use voice mail. Instruct employees to limit all but essential calls.
- _____ 6. Arrange for recycling. Order additional trash containers, trash bags, marking pens and labels. (One client provided fluorescent orange labels which said "Basura" (trash!) in Spanish, since most of the cleaning crew did not read English!)
- _____ 7. Create "What To Do If..." flyers. This handout should describe the procedures for the day, where to get supplies, and who to contact if there is a problem.
- _____ 8. Create a "Problem/Question Form" to hand out to staff at the beginning of the day, which can be picked up during the day for solving issues that arise.
- _____ 9. Notify the building maintenance crew that there will be extra trash that day. Engage their cooperation to move heavy boxes. A monetary reward may be appropriate.
- _____ 10. Assign someone to take photographs before, during, and after the event.
- _____ 11. Purchase prizes for staff: "most valuable find", "most unusual find," "most trash" etc. (Some companies provide special T-shirts for the occasion.)

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- _____ 12. Establish a “white elephant room” for items staff determine are not “useful, beautiful, or loved.” At the end of the day, give the remaining items to a non-profit agency if it seems appropriate.
- _____ 13. Arrange for food at the beginning of the day and provide lunch for everyone. This creates an opportunity for discussing progress.
- _____ 14. If you have not previously had a training session on “The Art of Wastebasketry®,” invite an expert to give a 30-minute presentation with tips for maximizing the day.
- _____ 15. Make arrangements to gather everyone together 30 minutes before the official end of the day. Hand out evaluation forms to gather information such as:
 - a. What questions do you have as a result of today’s activities?
 - b. How much more time do you need to finish the job?
 - c. What can we do to improve our new Productive Environment Day?
- _____ 16. Coordinator should discuss the evaluation forms submitted by the participants with management, and determine what steps to take next, and when.
- _____ 17. Communicate the positive outcome of the event to all participants – e.g., how much trash, how many empty file cabinets, how many office supplies found, etc.
- _____ 18. Consider making this an annual or semi-annual event. One company does it on St. Patrick’s Day and Halloween.

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